

**RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF OCTOBER 7, 2010 MEETING**

Board Members Present: Edward Field, Acting Chair; Steve Durkee; and William Kennedy.

Other Committee Members Present: Stephen Devine; Everett Stuart; John Flaherty; Stephen Farrell; and Kevin Flynn.

Absent: Thomas Deller, Christopher Long.

Also Present: Henry Kinch; Mark Therrien; Amy Pettine; Anne Galbraith; and Ellen Mandly and members of the public whose names are on the meeting sign-in sheet.

Mr. Field asked if the Committee members had an opportunity to review the minutes of the meeting held September 2, 2010. The members indicated that they had and three members suggested minor changes which were noted. Mr. Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes with the suggested changes. Mr. Devine seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Ms. Pettine reported that staff received comments on the first draft of the strategic plan from members of the Committee and met with and received comments from Tom Deller. She said those comments are

reflected in the current iteration of the plan and she discussed some of the big changes such as moving the five goals to the front of the document, adding more detail to the introduction to make it more visionary, and adding additional rail and land use implication language.

She said staff met with Mike Lewis, Phil Kidd and Steve Devine from RIDOT and Kevin Flynn and Karen Scott from Statewide Planning to discuss the intermodal and land use pieces of the plan and the implications for RIDOT and Statewide Planning. She said that pursuant to comments received at the last Committee meeting, a final chapter was added summarizing the financial impacts of the plan.

Ms. Pettine said minor tweaks and typo changes were made to the plan, along with one important change on final page where the figure for additional operating and capital needs was changed from \$2.5 million to \$1.75 million. Anne Galbraith said that Amy had met with various members of senior staff over the last month to discuss specific recommendations in the plan and to work on defining costs.

Ms. Pettine said at the Grow Smart presentation held the previous day staff stated that the strategic plan does not include the full cost of the street car system. The streetcar cost was intentionally left out because it has not been determined that a streetcar system is what we want for the State. The plan does however include the cost of preliminary engineering for the streetcar as this would be the next

phase and should realistically be included in a 5-year plan. She said that if the streetcar initiative is approved, the capital budget could be amended in future years to include the cost.

Ms. Galbraith proceeded to agenda item 5, the format and strategy for public release of the plan and how to package same for various audiences. Mr. Field suggested that the Board of Directors review the preliminary plan and that the plan be vetted in public forums. John Flaherty agreed with putting the plan out for public comment and offered suggestions on how to facilitate the process.

Mr. Field asked for an update on the presentation to Grow Smart Rhode Island and Mark Therrien said the plan got a very strong reception. A discussion ensued about how to tailor the presentation of the plan for various groups and Mr. Flynn suggested that the presenters stick to the vision of the plan and not get into too much detail at this stage regarding funding. Mr. Durkee agreed that the first step is to sell the vision and funding comes later. Mr. Field suggested adding a Powerpoint to the public and Board meeting presentations.

A lengthy discussion ensued among the Committee members with all offering suggestions on various groups and agencies across the state who might be interested in having the plan presented to them. Mr. Field asked Mr. Farrell to assist with presenting the plan to the unions and Mr. Farrell said he would be happy to help and asked about presenting the plan to legislators. After a brief discussion the

Committee agreed that it might help to have legislative staffers participate in the vetting process, but the actual legislators should receive the plan when finalized. The Committee finished by complimenting staff and saying the plan well crafted and they appreciated their hard work.

Ms. Pettine asked what role the new Chief Executive Officer should play in the vetting process and after discussion it was suggested that Tom Deller meet with the new CEO and familiarize him or her with the plan. Mr. Flaherty asked about the timeline for finalizing the plan and Mr. Field said it should be finalized for the December Board meeting. Mr. Kinch asked if the ultimate goal is to request the legislature for “x” amount of dollars to fund the plan. Mr. Field said the goal is to create a plan of where we want to be in five years and we’ll figure out how to pay for it later.

Mr. Field suggested that a motion be made to present the draft strategic plan to the Board of Directors. Mr. Kennedy made the motion to present the plan to the Board and Mr. Flaherty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Field moved on to agenda item # 3, the concept of strategic management. Ms. Pettine said this relates to the one page handout entitled “relationship between the strategic plan and a strategic management and implementation plan”. She said the first draft of the plan had more language related to in-house implementation and it

was determined that this language was not needed in the public version of the plan and that a separate management implementation document should be created. She then briefly elaborated on the one-page handout.

Mr. Field suggested that the new CEO should take the lead in the implementation process and Ms. Pettine agreed saying that this was the reason the section on implementation was removed from the document.

Next Mr. Flaherty and Mr. Durkee gave staff sundry suggestions and staff answered questions and discussed the suggestions with the Committee. Mr. Devine suggested that the word transit be used as opposed to transportation. Mr. Flaherty opined that a picture is worth a thousand words and suggested adding more photos and said a greater emphasis should be placed on the correlation between transit and economic development. Mr. Flaherty finished by offering constructive criticism on the funding section and staff asked questions and took notes.

Next Mr. Therrien discussed agenda item 6, consideration of premium bus service and said this topic had come up at the last Board meeting and staff was asked to research the issue. He said they are conducting research on zone systems and trying to better identify who rides on longer trips and who uses the park & rides.

Mr. Therrien then discussed the handout which proposed two options, charging a premium fare for existing express service and/or creating new express park & ride service. Mr. Farrell commented that in the past zoned service has not worked and he gave examples. Mr. Therrien agreed that in the past neither drivers nor passengers liked zoned service.

Mr. Devine suggested integrating an express/premium service concept directly to the state's park & ride lots. He said that RIDOT does periodic vehicle counts at all the RIDOT park & ride lots, and that he would have counts taken before the next Committee meeting so that the numbers are current. He also offered to research FHWA regulations regarding the ability to charge parking fees at park & ride lots.

The members then discussed park & ride lots and the possibility of upgrading them and charging a fee and how the fee would be collected. Mr. Field directed staff to research the capabilities of the fareboxes to determine if they can be programmed to accept and record premium fares. Mr. Therrien said he would do research on potential revenue from parking fees at the park & ride lots and the capabilities of the farebox. A brief discussion ensued regarding lot capacity and the current availability of parking spaces and lot security. Mr. Therrien said he would research these issues and report back. Mr. Field suggested he work with Paul LaFlamme on the farebox issue.

Mr. Field asked for public comment and John Flaherty distributed the Grow Smart Rhode Island briefing book for candidates. Mr. Durkee expressed concern over the sinking asphalt in Kennedy Plaza and Mr. Devine offered RIDOT's assistance.

There being no further business Mr. Durkee made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Farrell seconded. The meeting was unanimously adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Mandly

Recording Secretary